

House Bill 5037 AAC the State Budget for the Biennium ending June 30, 2023, Department of Developmental Services

Good afternoon, Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Lyn Lorenzo, and I am a Program Director for The Arc of Southington.

I am writing this request today to ask you to honor the long-term plan to address under funding of community nonprofits and increase funding this year by an additional \$461million, or 8% in total for FY23.

Our direct support professionals have worked tirelessly through the pandemic during very unusual and uncertain times. Our staff showed up everyday and worked long hours to provide the necessary care to our individuals with developmental disabilities.

Unfortunately, agencies like ours are now in competition with employers such as Amazon and Walmart that require no specialized training, pay more in salary, and offer numerous hiring incentives. This is in direct competition to non-profits like us. Many families are desperate to place their loved ones in day programs or residential settings, but we cannot hire enough staff to provide services to these families due to the responsibility that comes with the jobs we do and low wage the job pays.

The increase in this year's budget is extremely appreciated. However, with rising costs over the last year due to a 6% increase in inflation, the increase does not cover the rising costs for vehicles, gas, food, heat, and utilities etc.

Please support the additional funding of \$461 million for Connecticut nonprofits. Thank you for your time today.

Lyn Lorenzo

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